

Promising Practice: Bilingual Pre-Practical Nursing Program

Full Employment Council

21st Century Healthcare Works

To address local workforce needs, Full Employment Council and local partners collaborated to develop a bilingual training program for pre-practical nursing. The Preparados en Salud (PeS) program combines Certified Nurse Assistant training, academic and workforce preparation, and prerequisite classes designed to help students seeking admission to Metropolitan Community College's (MCC) practical nursing program. PeS serves participants in the 21st Century Healthcare Works initiative, a Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG) program funded by the Administration for Children and Families' Office of Family Assistance.

PeS is a partnership between the Full Employment Council, Metropolitan Community College, the Hispanic Economic Development Corporation (HEDC), Jewish Vocational Services (JVS), and the National Council of La Raza. In 2010, the Hispanic Economic Development Corporation was researching employment and training opportunities in the Kansas City area. HEDC approached Full Employment Council and MCC to plan for workforce partnerships specifically within the Hispanic community. At the same time, local hospitals were reporting serving increasingly larger Spanish-speaking populations, but having trouble finding enough bilingual staff who could communicate with individuals during direct care. After participating in a workforce development forum in the fall of 2010, these organizations decided to form a partnership to develop a bilingual training program resulting in employment in the healthcare industry.

FEC's role is to provide recruitment, assessment, screening, career counseling, program placement, and supportive services to PeS participants before training, and employment placement and retention services after training. JVS provides on-site case management services to all PeS students, including intake, assessment, appropriate referrals for services needed outside of the scope of JVS services, and follow-up meetings with each student as necessary, but at least monthly to assess progress and or barriers. JVS reevaluates case management plans as necessary for successful outcomes.

The National Council of La Raza provides technical assistance and information about the Carreras en Salud program in Chicago, which serves as the model for the PeS program. Truman Medical Center and Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics provided input about employer needs. Other employer partners are Cabot Health Center and Samuel Rodgers Health Center.

The program's training components include:

1. Certified Nurse Assistant
2. Patient Care Technician
3. Mental Health First Aid
4. Level One Medication Aide
5. American Heart Association CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) for Healthcare Providers

6. Nursing Seminar (employability skills, bilingual medical terminology, professionalism)
7. Math for Nursing (supplemental instruction for Cell Biology class)
8. Nursing Prerequisites
 - a. BIOL100 – Cell Biology
 - b. BIOL109 – Anatomy and Physiology

The first class graduated in September 2012. Over the long term, the PeS partnership is designed to: (1) create a career path in the healthcare field that is based on best practices; (2) provide new and stable access for low-skill Hispanic adults in community college certificate and degree programs in healthcare; (3) place certificate holders and graduates in corresponding career path employment and assist with their advancement in their careers; and (4) develop a best-practice model that will be recognized within the workforce development field at the national level. This initiative will help meet the demand for bilingual healthcare workers as well as serve the region's burgeoning Hispanic population.